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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000103

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PARM IR UNSC MNUC ETTC KNNP CY
SUBJECT: IRAN/CYPRUS: NEXT STEPS ON MONCHEGORSK

REF: A. NICOSIA 104
 1B. NICOSIA 108
 1C. USUN 75

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Classified By: Amb. Susan Rice, for reasons 1.4 (B) AND (D)

1. (C/NF) SUMMARY: USUN seeks to continue to shape the UN response to the discovery of Iranian arms-related material on the M/V Monchegorsk in violation of UN sanctions on Iran. Such a response should motivate Cyprus to responsibly dispose of the proscribed cargo and ensure the UN Security Council's Iran Sanctions Committee responds in a credible and proportionate way to this violation. The Iran Sanctions Committee has already provided an interim response to Cyprus and we propose a second letter, which would request a thorough inspection of the cargo, to increase the pressure on Cyprus to do the right thing. Separately, USUN proposes that, as a first step in dealing with the actual violation, the Iran Sanctions Committee would request explanations from the parties involved (i.e., Iran and Syria). The Committee would then consider a menu of possible responses, such as urging enhanced vigilance over the Iranian shipping line involved. END SUMMARY.

12. (C/NF) USUN seeks to continue to shape the UN response to the discovery of arms-related materiel aboard the M/V Monchegorsk, a Cypriot-flagged vessel shipping this cargo from Iran to Syria in an apparent violation of UNSCR 1747's ban on such arms transfers. (NOTE: On February 3, Cyprus requested guidance from the UN Security Council's Iran Sanctions Committee on whether the discovery of the cargo indeed constituted a sanctions violation and, if so, how to dispose of the cargo. As of February 9, the vessel is docked in Cyprus. END NOTE.) An effective UN response should: 1) motivate Cyprus to dispose responsibly of the proscribed cargo, and 2) ensure the Iran Sanctions Committee responds in a credible and proportionate way to the violation itself. We plan to proceed in a low-key manner that will not unduly raise the profile of the issue or undermine other diplomatic priorities with Iran.

DEALING WITH CYPRUS: GIVING NICOSIA A WAY OUT

13. (C/NF) As a first step in responding to Cyprus, the Iran Sanctions Committee has approved an interim response that confirmed that UNSCR 1747 covers conventional arms (not, as suggested in the Cypriot letter, just nuclear-related items), urged Cyprus to retain the cargo for possible further inspection or until appropriate disposition is determined, and encouraged Cyprus to explore options for other Member States to assist in storing, safe-keeping or disposing the materiel. When Japanese Perm Rep Yukio Takasu hand-delivered

this response to Cypriot Perm Rep Minas Hadjimichael on February 6, he also said he told Hadjimichael that this situation was a "clear case of a violation" of UNSCR 1747 and the materiel should not be returned to Iran.

¶4. (C/NF) As a next step, USUN intends to propose the Committee write Cyprus a second letter to say:

-- Based on a review of the information provided by Cyprus, the Committee determines that a violation of UNSCR 1747 has indeed occurred;

-- Before expressing further views on the matter, the Committee seeks to know the content of all the cargo, not just the results of the partial inspection conducted by Cypriot authorities;

-- The Committee therefore requests Cyprus to inspect all the containers.

¶5. (C/NF) USUN believes the mere prospect of the Committee sending such a letter -- and effectively micro-managing Cyprus's response -- might inspire Cyprus to accept one of the many offers of third-party assistance to dispose of the cargo. We will recommend privately to Hadjimichael that he convince Nicosia to take advantage of the window provided by the first letter, since subsequent communications from the Committee are unlikely to be more politically helpful to Cyprus.

DEALING WITH IRAN/SYRIA: RESPONDING TO A VIOLATION

¶6. (C/NF) In parallel to our efforts to deal with the

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disposition of the cargo, USUN will seek to focus the Iran Sanctions Committee on the central issue: a violation of UNSCR 1747 by Iran (the state that transferred the arms-related materiel) and Syria (the state that procured the goods). Per UNSCR 1737, the Iran Sanctions Committee has a mandate to "examine and take appropriate action on information regarding alleged violations of measures" imposed on Iran. To date, however, the Committee has not dealt with such a clear violation.

¶7. (C/NF) USUN will propose the Committee first write to the parties involved (Iran/Syria) to request an explanation and any further relevant information about the arms-related materiel within one week. Depending on the responses (or non-responses), the Committee would then consider possible actions, such as:

-- Send a Note Verbale to notify all UN Member States of this incident and urge enhanced vigilance of Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), which chartered the M/V Monchegorsk;

-- Invite the Perm Reps of Iran and Syria to meet with the Committee to discuss these incidents and answer questions;

-- Send follow-up letters to Iran and/or Syria warning them against further violations;

-- Refer the matter to the Security Council for its consideration (e.g., a Council Presidential Statement or discussion).

¶8. (C/NF) USUN notes that the Cypriot report to the Committee provides solid evidence of arms-related materiel found on the M/V Monchegorsk. In line with our low-key approach, we see no need to share with the Committee information from U.S. Naval inspections of the Monchegorsk, unless a Committee member challenges the accuracy of the Cypriot report and corroboration is required. USUN will also discourage actual meetings of the Iran Sanctions Committee

unless absolutely required.
Rice